

PENDING CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method comprising:

mounting on a first computer a required number of mass storage devices needed by a second computer;

coupling the required number of mass storage devices to a storage device emulator that is coupled to the second computer, the mass storage devices being remotely coupled to the storage device emulator via a network;

sending a message, from the first computer to the second computer, that informs the second computer how many mass storage devices are available on the first computer for use by the second computer, wherein the message is sent using a remote disk [[Java]] applet on the first computer;

dynamically emulating the required number of mass storage devices in the storage device emulator; and

booting the second computer utilizing the emulated mass storage devices in the storage device emulator.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

assigning a logical unit number to each of the mass storage devices, wherein the storage device emulator communicates with each of the mass storage devices by identifying the logical unit number of the mass storage device being utilized.

3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the storage device emulator communicates with the required number of mass storage devices by wrapping a Universal Serial Bus (USB) protocol data from the second computer in a Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) packet.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein each mass storage device is a USB device.

5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein at least one of the mass storage devices is a floppy disk drive.

6. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein at least one of the mass storage devices is a Compact Disk-Read Only Memory (CD-ROM) drive.

7. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the network coupling the mass storage devices with the storage device emulator is a secure administration network.

8. (currently amended) A system comprising:

a first computer;

a second computer coupled to the first computer via a network;

a required number of mass storage devices, needed by the second computer, mounted on the first computer;

a storage device emulator coupled to the required number of mass storage devices and the second computer, the mass storage devices being remotely coupled to the storage device emulator via the network;

means for sending a message, from the first computer to the second computer, that informs the second computer how many mass storage devices are available on the first computer for use by the second computer, wherein the message is sent using a remote disk [[Java]] applet on the first computer;

means for dynamically emulating the required number of mass storage devices in the storage device emulator; and

means for booting the second computer utilizing the emulated mass storage devices in the storage device emulator.

9. (original) The system of claim 8, further comprising:

means for assigning a logical unit number to each of the mass storage devices, wherein the storage device emulator communicates with each of the mass storage devices by identifying the logical unit number of the mass storage device being utilized.

10. (original) The system of claim 8, wherein the storage device emulator communicates with the required number of mass storage devices by wrapping a Universal Serial Bus (USB) protocol

data from the second computer in a Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) packet.

11. (original) The system of claim 8, wherein each mass storage device is a USB device.

12. (original) The system of claim 11, wherein at least one of the mass storage devices is a floppy disk drive.

13. (original) The system of claim 11, wherein at least one of the mass storage devices is a Compact Disk-Read Only Memory (CD-ROM) drive.

14. (original) The system of claim 8, wherein the network coupling the mass storage devices with the storage device emulator is a secure administration network.

15-20. (cancelled)

21. (original) A method comprising:

mounting a plurality of mass storage devices on an administrative computer;

presenting to a USB Mass Storage Device Interface on a remote bootable computer a command indicating how many mass storage devices are mounted on the administrative computer and are available for use by the remote bootable computer;

disconnecting a USB Storage Device Emulator from the remote bootable computer while the USB Mass Storage Device Interface is reconfigured to show how many storage devices are mounted on the administrative computer and are available for use by the remote bootable computer; and

reconnecting the USB Storage Device Emulator to the remote bootable computer with the reconfigured USB Mass Storage Device Interface.

22. (new) A method comprising:

mounting at least one mass storage device on an administrative computer;

invoking, at the administrative computer, a remote disk [[Java]] applet, wherein the remote disk [[Java]] applet sends a command, to a USB Mass Storage Device Interface (USB-MSDI) on a bootable computer, indicating how many mass storage devices are mounted on and available to the bootable computer;

sending, from the USB-MSDI to a USB Storage Device Emulator on the bootable computer, a signal that instructs the USB Storage Device Emulator to disconnect from the bootable computer while the USB-MSDI is being reconfigured with an appropriate number of mass storage devices, wherein the appropriate number of mass storage devices is limited to a maximum Logical Unit Number that is set by the administrative computer;

subsequently reconnecting the USB Storage Device Emulator to the bootable computer, wherein the USB Storage Device Emulator now presents the appropriate number of mass storage devices as emulated mass storage devices; and

adding the emulated mass storage devices to a list of drives that are connected to the bootable computer.

23. (new) The method of claim 22, wherein the emulated mass storage devices are added to the list of drives in response to an operating system of the bootable computer detecting the USB Storage Device Emulator with the emulated mass storage devices.